Amendments to the Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An apparatus comprising:

a portable terminal configured for being worn or carried by a user and operable to facilitate the performance of tasks by the user through speech;

the terminal having bi-directional voice capabilities including a user dependent speech recognition functionality for converting user speech to a digital format and a text-to-speech functionality for converting data in a digital format into audio signals to be played to a user;

a peripheral device for coupling to the terminal and having at least one line for directing audio signals to the terminal;

the peripheral device configured to generate a characterizing signal in the form of a non-speech data signal in an audio format and to forward [[a]] the characterizing signal for a particular user on the at least one audio signal line to the terminal, the user characterizing signal being associated with one or more user-specific operational parameters of the terminal;

the terminal configured for receiving the user characterizing signal and then configuring the bi-directional voice capabilities of the terminal using the one or more user-specific operational parameters that are associated with the characterizing signal;

the user-specific operational parameters including at least one of voice templates for speech recognition and text-to-speech preferences for the user for providing more efficient use of the terminal for the performance of tasks.

2. (CANCELLED)

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the characterizing signal is associated with at least one of a particular use, a particular user, a particular user group and a particular location.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the characterizing signal is reflective of a user ID of the peripheral device.

5. (CANCELLED)

6. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the terminal includes frequency analysis circuitry for processing the characterizing signal.

7. (CANCELLED)

8. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the characterizing signal is one of a DTMF tone and a PWM stream.

9. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device is a headset having a microphone and a microphone line, the characterizing signal being forwarded on the microphone line.

10. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device includes a tone generator for generating audio tones to form the characterizing signal.

11. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device is configured to automatically forward the characterizing signal to the terminal when it is coupled to the terminal.

12. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device has an input, the peripheral device forwarding the characterizing signal to the terminal when the input is engaged.

13. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device includes circuitry for generating the characterizing signal, the circuitry being powered by the terminal.

14. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the peripheral device includes circuitry for generating the characterizing signal, the circuitry being powered by a battery source in the peripheral device.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein operational parameters for the terminal are stored in memory, the terminal operable for accessing the memory using the characterizing signal received from the peripheral device.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein operational parameters are stored in a menu, the terminal operable for accessing the menu based upon the characterizing parameter to obtain the one or more user-specific operational parameters.

17. (CANCELLED)

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said terminal is configured for coupling with multiple different peripheral devices for multiple different users, the terminal being configurable to operate with multiple user-specific operational parameters associated with the characterizing signals of the multiple different peripheral devices.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A terminal for communicating with a peripheral device which has a line for sending audio signals, the terminal comprising:

a portable body~~, the portable terminal~~ configured for being worn or carried by a user and operable to facilitate the performance of tasks by the user through speech;

circuitry for implementing bi-directional voice capabilities including a user dependent speech recognition functionality for converting user speech to a digital format and a text-to-speech functionality for converting data in a digital format into audio signals to be played to a user;

circuitry configured to read a characterizing signal from the audio signal line of a peripheral device, the characterizing signal being in the form of a non-speech data signal in an audio format and being associated with a particular user and ~~also being~~ associated with one or more user-specific operational parameters of the terminal;

the terminal responsive to configure the bi-directional voice capabilities of the terminal using the one or more user-specific operational parameters associated with the characterizing signal;

the user-specific operational parameters including at least one of voice templates for speech recognition and text-to-speech preferences for the user for providing more efficient use of the terminal for the performance of tasks.

20. (CANCELLED)

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the operational parameters for the terminal are stored in memory which is accessed by the terminal using the characterizing signal.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the characterizing signal is reflective of a user ID of the peripheral device.

23. (ORIGINAL) The terminal of claim 19 including frequency analysis circuitry operable for processing the characterizing signal.

24. (CANCELLED)

25. (ORIGINAL) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the characterizing signal is one of a DTMF tone and a PWM stream.

26. (ORIGINAL) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the peripheral device is a headset having a microphone and a microphone line, the characterizing signal being forwarded on the microphone line.

27. (ORIGINAL) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the circuitry is configured to automatically read the characterizing signal from a peripheral device upon coupling the peripheral device to the terminal.

28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The terminal of claim 19 wherein the characterizing signal is associated with at least one of a particular use, a particular user, a particular user group, and a particular location.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A peripheral device for use with a portable terminal having bi-directional voice capabilities and configured for being worn or carried by a user to facilitate the performance of tasks by the user through speech, wherein the voice capabilities include a user dependent speech recognition functionality for converting user speech to a digital format and a text-to-speech functionality for converting data in a digital format into audio signals to be played to a user, the peripheral comprising:

circuitry and at least one audio signal line for directing audio signals to the terminal;

the circuitry configured for having ID information regarding a specific user, the circuitry further configured to generate ~~forward~~ a characterizing signal in the form of a non-speech data signal in an audio format that is reflective of the ID information for a

particular user and to forward that characterizing signal on the at least one audio signal line to the terminal;

the characterizing signal being associated with one or more user-specific operational parameters of the terminal that include at least one of voice templates for speech recognition and text-to-speech preferences for the user for configuring the bi-directional voice capabilities of the terminal to provide more efficient use of the terminal for the performance of tasks.

30. (CANCELLED)

31. (CANCELLED)

32. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the characterizing signal is one of a DTMF tone and a PWM stream.

33. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the peripheral device is a headset having a microphone and a microphone line, the characterizing signal being forwarded on the microphone line.

34. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the peripheral device includes a tone generator for generating audio tones to form the characterizing signal.

35. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the peripheral device is operable to automatically forward the characterizing signal to the terminal when it is coupled to the terminal.

36. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the peripheral device has an input, the peripheral device forwarding the characterizing signal to the terminal when the input is engaged.

37. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the circuitry is powered by the terminal.

38. (ORIGINAL) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the circuitry is powered by a battery source in the peripheral device.

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The peripheral device of claim 29 wherein the characterizing signal is reflective of at least one of a particular user group or a particular location.

40. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for interfacing between a peripheral device and a portable terminal having bi-directional voice capabilities and configured for being worn or carried by a user to facilitate the performance of tasks by the user

through speech, the voice capabilities including a user dependent speech recognition functionality for converting user speech to a digital format and a text-to-speech functionality for converting data in a digital format into audio signals to be played to a user, the method comprising:

with a peripheral device having at least one audio signal line for directing audio signals to the terminal, generating a characterizing signal in the form of a non-speech data signal in an audio format that is reflective of ID information for a particular user and forwarding [[a]] the characterizing signal for a particular user to the terminal on the at least one audio signal line;

associating the characterizing signal with one or more user-specific operational parameters of the terminal;

configuring the bi-directional voice capabilities of the terminal using the one or more user-specific operational parameters that are associated with the characterizing signal;

the user-specific operational parameters including at least one of voice templates for speech recognition and text-to-speech preferences for the user for providing more efficient use of the terminal for the performance of tasks.

41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40 wherein the characterizing signal is associated with at least one of a particular use, a particular user, a particular user group and a particular location.

42. (CANCELLED)

43. (CANCELLED)

44. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 40 wherein the characterizing signal is reflective of a user ID of the peripheral device.

45. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 wherein the characterizing signal is an audio signal.

46. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 wherein the terminal includes frequency analysis circuitry operable for processing the characterizing signal.

47. (CANCELLED)

48. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 wherein the characterizing signal is one of a DTMF tone and a PWM stream.

49. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 wherein the peripheral device is a headset having a microphone and a microphone line and further comprising forwarding the characterizing signal on the microphone line.

50. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 further comprising generating audio tones with a tone generator to form the characterizing signal.

51. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 further comprising automatically forwarding the characterizing signal to the terminal when the peripheral it is coupled to the terminal.

52. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 40 wherein the peripheral device has an input, the method further comprising forwarding the characterizing signal to the terminal when the input is engaged.

53. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 42 wherein operational parameters for the terminal are stored in memory, further comprising accessing the memory using the characterizing signal.

54. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 42 wherein the operational parameters are in a menu, further comprising accessing the menu based upon the characterizing parameter.

55-66. (CANCELLED)